

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

ACDA-07 /074 W

-----241653Z 024376 /53

R 241245Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1643

INFO /AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN 2854

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 0198

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, DM, TO

SUBJECT: GOT ISSUES LUKEWARM STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR BENINESE
GOVERNMENT

1. PRESIDENT EYADEMA CONVENED THE CENTRAL
COMMITTEE OF HIS RASSEMBLEMENT DU PEUPLE
TOGOLAIS (RPT) ON JANUARY 22, 1977 TO CONSIDER
VARIOUS ISSUES, INCLUDING THE MERCENARY
INVASION OF BENIN. THE COMMITTEE STATED
FOLLOWING THE MEETING THAT: "IT CONDEMNS
VIGOROUSLY AND DENOUNCES THE UTILIZATION OF
MERCENARIES IN AFRICA, NOTABLY IN THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BENIN, WHICH TRAMPLES THE MOST
ELEMENTAL RIGHTS OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE
BENINESE PEOPLE."

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"THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RPT STRONGLY
SUPPORTS THE FRATERNAL BENINESE PEOPLE IN THEIR
JUST STRUGGLE TO PRESERVE THEIR INDEPENDENCE,
UNITY AND NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY."

"...THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RPT CON-
GRATULATES GENERAL GNASSINGBE EYADEMA, PRESIDENT

OF THE REPUBLIC AND PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF THE
RPT, FOR HIS WILLINGNESS TO GIVE HIS MORAL AND
POLITICAL SUPPORT TO ALL COUNTRIES WHICH MAY BE
THE VICTIM OF MERCENARY INVASIONS
AND TO GIVE MILITARY AID TO
ANY COUNTRY SUFFERING SUCH AGGRESSION WHICH
MAY ASK FOR IT."

2. COMMENT: THIS RATHER LUKEWARM AND OPAQUE
STATEMENT REPRESENTS A GOT DECISION TO AT LEAST
TAKE NOTE OF THE FACT THAT "SOMETHING" APPEARS
TO HAVE HAPPENED IN COTONOU ON JANUARY 16.
CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM EXISTS IN THE TOGOLESE
AND LOCAL FRENCH COMMUNITY OVER THE FACTS OF
THE MERCENARY INVASION, AS REPORTED BY THE GPRB.
THIS SKEPTICISM LED TO A GOT DECISION TO REFRAIN
FROM QUICK ISSUANCE OF A STATEMENT OF SUPPORT
OF THE GPRB; DESPITE THE JANUARY 22 CENTRAL
COMMITTEE STATEMENT SUCH SKEPTICISM PERSISTS.

3. THERE IS SOME LOCAL FEELING THAT A MERCENARY
RAID DID IN FACT TAKE PLACE ON JANUARY 16 BUT
THAT THE MERCENARIES HAD BEEN PENETRATED BY
THE GPRB WITH THE RESULT THAT THE GPRB KNEW
WHEN THE RAID WAS COMING, PREPARED FOR IT
MILITARILY, AND SUBSEQUENTLY EXPLOITED IT FOR
DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES.

4. THE REFERENCE IN THE JANUARY 22 STATEMENT
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TO TOGOLESE WILLINGNESS TO GIVE MILITARY SUPPORT
TO ANY GOVERNMENT WHICH SUFFERS A MERCENARY
INVASION APPEARS TO BE DELIBERATELY AMBIGUOUS.
THE TOGOLESE ARE KNOWN TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT
POSSIBLE CUBAN INTERVENTION IN WEST AFRICA AND
THIS REFERENCE CAN PROBABLY BE CONSTRUED TO
INCLUDE THE CUBANS AS WELL AS RUN-OF-THE-MILL
MERCENARIES.
PALMER

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